



Nathan Deal
Governor

Bobby Cagle, MSW
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Reg Griffin
404-656-0239
reg.griffin@dec.al.ga.gov



Bright from the Start presents
Georgia Pre-K: Visioning a PreK-3rd Grade Approach

University of Washington College of Education Research Scientist
Dr. Kristie Kauerz is guest speaker

ATLANTA, Ga., (March 29, 2013) – Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning continues its 20th Anniversary celebration of Georgia’s Pre-K Program Wednesday night, April 3, 2013, with a special event sponsored by The Annie E. Casey Foundation, United Way of Greater Atlanta and Sheltering Arms Early Education and Family Centers. The event, being held from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM at the Dunbar Learning Complex in Atlanta, will feature Dr. Kristie Kauerz, research scientist at the University of Washington College of Education and co-developer of The National P-3 Center. Dr. Kauerz will discuss the promise and possibilities of building an education continuum that sustains what children achieve in Pre-K.

“Dr. Kauerz is uniquely qualified to share with us what the present framework for P-3 looks like nationally and what other states are doing to further this approach,” said DECAL Commissioner Bobby Cagle. “She is very familiar with the Georgia early education landscape and will assist us in discussing this important concept for the future.”

Georgia Pre-K: Visioning a PreK-3rd Grade Approach – Page 2

The event will include tours of the Dunbar Learning Complex, part of a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization effort led by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, United Way of Greater Atlanta, Sheltering Arms and other partners. Opened in 2010, the complex provides education to children from birth through fifth grade. The early learning center is now part of the highly regarded Educare Learning network, which is known for quality early childhood education and influences policy and practice across the nation.

Georgia's Pre-K Program was created in 1992 after voters approved the creation of the Georgia Lottery for Education to support college scholarships and a voluntary prekindergarten program. This year Georgia is investing over \$300 million to serve approximately 84,000 of the state's youngest learners, more than 60% of all four year olds. The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) recently ranked Georgia's Pre-K Program as one of the top state programs in the nation based on quality standards, teacher qualifications, and enrollment. In February, President Barack Obama recognized Georgia's program in his State of the Union Address and the same week visited College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center in Decatur, Georgia.

About the Annie E. Casey Foundation

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a private philanthropy that creates a brighter future for the nation's children by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow. For more information, visit www.aecf.org.

About Sheltering Arms:

Sheltering Arms Early Education & Family Centers is celebrating its 125th anniversary of giving low-income working parents and their young children a great start on a promising future. Sheltering Arms provides nationally-accredited, effective early learning and child care for almost 2,500 infants, toddlers, and preschoolers each day. 90% of those children qualify for needs-based child care tuition scholarships. Comprehensive services build the strong families and communities children need to thrive, as evidenced by our results. 95% of Sheltering Arms children meet or exceed school readiness and developmental milestones every year. For more information, visit www.shelteringarmsforkids.com.

About United Way of Greater Atlanta

United Way of Greater Atlanta is the second-largest in the nation with more than \$80 million in fundraising annually. We invest in more than 140 programs in 13 counties through the Community Impact Fund and participate in Collaborative Networks with caring community partners to address challenges facing families and individuals. To donate, volunteer or advocate, dial 2-1-1 or visit www.unitedwayatlanta.org.

About Bright from the Start

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages voluntary quality enhancement programs.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.dec.al.ga.gov.